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Deeply concerned by the continuing decrease of contributions to the Programme, which has already affected a number of activities, beginning with the suspension in the current year of publications such as the Bulletin and the Topical Papers,

1. Takes note with concern of the report of the Secretary-General of 19 July 1996 on the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme;

2. Commends the Secretary-General for his efforts to make effective use of the limited resources available to him in disseminating as widely as possible information on arms limitation and disarmament to Governments, the media, non-governmental organizations, educational communities and research institutes, and in carrying out a seminar and conference programme;

3. Stresses the importance of the Programme, as a significant instrument in enabling developing countries to participate fully in the deliberations and negotiations on disarmament in the various United Nations bodies;

4. Notes with appreciation the contributions to the efforts of the Programme by the United Nations information centres and the regional centres for disarmament;

5. Recommends that the Programme focus its efforts:

(a) To inform, to educate and to generate public understanding of the importance of and support for multilateral action, including action by the United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament, in the field of arms limitation and disarmament, in a factual, balanced and objective manner, particularly through the continuing publication in all official languages of The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook and the Disarmament Review, as well as the updating of the Status of Multilateral Arms Regulation and Disarmament Agreements;

(b) To facilitate unimpeded access to and an exchange of information on ideas between the public sector and public interest groups and organizations, and to provide an independent source of balanced and factual information that takes into account a range of views to help further an informed debate on arms limitation, disarmament and security;

(c) To organize meetings to facilitate exchanges of views and information between governmental and non-governmental sectors and between governmental and other experts in order to facilitate the search for common ground;

6. Invites all Member States to contribute to the Voluntary Trust Fund for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme;

7. Commends the Secretary-General for supporting the efforts of universities, other academic institutions and non-governmental organizations active in the educational field in widening the worldwide availability of disarmament education, and invites him to continue to support and cooperate, without cost to the regular budget of the United Nations, with educational institutions and non-governmental organizations engaged in such efforts;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session a report covering both the implementation of the activities of the Programme by the United Nations system during the previous two years and the activities of the Programme contemplated by the system for the following two years;

9. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled "United Nations Disarmament Information Programme".

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